



HAMPDEN TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP
HAMPDEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MINUTES

MONDAY

JULY 12, 2021

6:00 P.M.

In Attendance:

Mayor Shelby Wright, Remotely
Councilor Eric Jarvi
Councilor Mark Cormier
Councilor Ivan McPike
Councilor Allen Esposito
Councilor Peter Erickson
Councilor Christine Cubberley

Paula Scott, Town Manager
Victor Smith, Public Works Director
Darcey Peakall, Pool Director-Remotely
Ellyn Chase, President of Hampden
Historical Society
Clifton Iler, Town Planner
Other members of the Public

A. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Jarvi called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion on the naming of the Grist Mill Bridge – requested by the Hampden Historical Society

Ellyn Chase, President of the Hampden Historical Society spoke on behalf of the Hampden Historical Society about the official naming of the new bridge over the Souadabscook Stream. She spoke in favor of naming the new bridge as the Wheeler Grist Mill Bridge. She informed that Benjamin Wheeler was the first settler of Hampden, having moved here from Durham, New Hampshire, along with his family in 1767 settling along the Souadabscook. He was responsible for building the very first grist mill along the stream and he also built the first sawmill which was close by. These acts allowed Hampden, then known as Wheeler's Borough, to flourish. She advocates naming the new bridge after Benjamin Wheeler as they believe it is a way to recognize Wheeler for the role he played, and ensuring Hampdens very existence. Town resident Jim Folsom spoke in favor of Ellen's comments and feels that having the opportunity to recognize Benjamin Wheeler is very important. He paraphrased the motto of Hampden Academy- rooted in tradition, but always looking to the future – so he is hoping that by naming the bridge Wheeler Grist Mill Bridge that we will connect that past with the future. Council directed Town Manager to work on a resolution to be presented at a Town Council Meeting.

- b. Discussion on a sign at the Grist Mill Bridge – requested by Meghan Collins of the University of Maine

Town Manager Scott spoke on the Grist Mill Bridge and that Megan Collins contacted her and wanted to perhaps put up a sign that informs the public about the technology, and about the fact that that technology was developed and created at the University of Maine. That it was also built in a local business in Brewer, AIT, and is the first use of this technology in the United States. Also, we received some kudos at the dedication

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for Hamden being so progressively thinking, in that we changed the design of the bridge to endorse this material. So, they wanted to kind of put all of that together into some informational signage and looking to you for guidance on whether or not we wish to go forward with that. Councilor Jarvi felt having an informational plaque on one side of the bridge and another recognizing the name of the bridge, along the sidewalk, would be the best approach, as it would not be signage on the roadway. Consensus of Council is to have staff to continue to work on this, and to make sure we're in line with State regulations and to get some cost estimates and see if we can potentially raise money to do this.

c. Recommendation for the rate of interest paid on over paid taxes (tax abatements)

Town Manager Scott provided an update with requested information on the goal of approving the resolution on interest paid on abatements, at our next council meeting on July 19th. Part of the responsibility of the council is to not only set the interest rate that we charge for delinquent taxes, but to also set the interest rate that we pay on overpaid and abated taxes. And at the last meeting, there was a lot of discussion on that and a request to find out how much we paid last year. And that answer is \$0. Abatements were granted and we did not hold funds for any length of time beyond the due date, so we paid no money in interest. Consensus of council it to take to next Council Meeting.

d. Discussion on tracking for brown tail moths – update

Town Manager Scott provided an update on brown tail moth tracking. Mike has created a form on our website where residents can go on and type in the address or even location of infestation sightings and that information will be transferred to a map, available on our website. That way people can go on and find out where the infestations within the Town of Hamden are located.

She stated that what we do with that information needs to be a policy directive on whether or not we want to implement a program, a plan, where we embark on doing some measures, to prevent the defoliation. Councilor Jarvi suggested putting links on the website to information on brown tailed moth to let the homeowners know what kind of options are available.

At this time Council recognized Town resident Mary Ann Rhodes of 315 Emerson Mill Road for public comment. She stated that in March she learned that her house was considered a model home, and that it was zoned commercially. Her home needs repair. She spoke on the time that the Town changed from residential to commercial in her area. The town planned on something happening and now it has been 60 years and nothing has. Home needs repair and she asking how they can go to rural. Her husband spoke that once you get past the dump the road is rated at 23,000 pounds and questions how you could have an industrial complex. They have lived here nearly 20 years. They are asking that the neighborhood would be all zoned the same. That they are the only ones that don't have a grandfather clause, everybody else is industrial with a grandfather. Town Planner Clifton Iver spoke stating that they have been working on this for two to three weeks now. In the late 60's this area was zoned industrial, it hasn't changed its zoning designation since 1963. All of the houses on those sites have been grandfathered in because they were constructed prior to 1963. According to the building permit for the property in question, it was built as a model

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house log cabin, that would serve as an office use, so wasn't permitted in the zoning code. It has since been converted into a house that the Rhodes have been living in. There was never a residential component per the building permit. He is looking through old records and trying to find the planning board comments from the 1960's on the zoning classification and whether or not the use could have been grandfathered. What staff has advised was to submit a zoning application requesting a zoning map change amendment. What the Rhodes and neighbors are asking for is a uniform rezoning essentially to eliminate the industrial clause in that designation, and it would apply to all residents. Council recognizes that there is an issue here, rezoning would be an appropriate consideration and they are looking for a recommendation out of the Planning Board. Consensus of Council is for the Rhodes to submit a zoning application requesting a zoning change amendment to the Planning Board.

e. Discussion regarding remote participation in public proceedings

Town Manager Scott gave an overview of remote participation. Prior to the pandemic all bodies that belonged to any governmental body had to meet in person, there has never been a provision in the law to allow remote meetings by the elected officials or the appointed officials. However, the legislature made exception during the pandemic and that emergency legislation is set to expire on July 30th. New legislation did pass which allows for Council to set a policy to allow remote participation by the members of the body of the elected officials or the appointment officials. She is looking to find out whether or not council would like to permit themselves to meet remotely and if so, would need to define what the reasoning would be to allow for remote participation, spelled out right in the policy. Consensus of Council is that it is worth seeing if staff can develop a policy. Some guidance given by Council is for the policy to contain a distance requirement; all votes by roll call; and must be present in person for executive sessions. Council directed the Town Manager to have a draft policy at the next Council Meeting.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Gayle C. Decker, Town Clerk*